

Information Link

A Source of Information for Our Customers



Lisa Feldner, CIO

In this issue of the *Information Link*, I'm pleased to announce that project management efforts in North Dakota state government are proving to be beneficial and paying off. On October 2, North Dakota's National Information Technology Apprenticeship System (NITAS) earned top recognition by the National Association of Chief Information Officers (NASCIO) for their work in Project and Portfolio Management. The winning nomination *Building Project Manager Competencies* results from a two-year project initiated by the Enterprise Project Management Advisory Group and endorsed by the Enterprise Architecture Review Board and State Information Technology Advisory Committee. The success of North Dakota's NITAS program is a tribute to project managers from several different state agencies. *For more information about this award, please refer to the article on page 2.*

As the knowledge and skills of project managers increases, the success of our large information technology (IT) projects improves among agency large IT projects. During the past fiscal year, North Dakota state agencies completed eight large projects under ITD's oversight. Seven of the eight projects were completed under budget, resulting in a savings of \$2,787,401. Six of the projects were completed within an acceptable 20 percent schedule variance, based on project management guidelines.

On another note, ITD's 2006-07 Annual Report *setting expectations delivering results* is now posted to our website at <http://www.nd.gov/itd/pubs/>. This report gives a brief overview of ITD's seven divisions and highlights some of our accomplishments over the past fiscal year. As a customer-centric organization, ITD is not only setting expectations for itself to provide IT solutions to meet the needs of our customers, but we want to become the trusted IT partner by working together with our customers to deliver IT services that meet their needs.

ITD intends to promote the use Interactive Voice Response (IVR) following the upgrade of our current system. The new infrastructure is proving to be much more robust and reliable than today's system. IVR is a great solution for agencies who have clients who need to access or provide information from anywhere using a telephone.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Message From The CIO	1
NASCIO Awards Outstanding Achievement in the Field of State IT	2
North Dakota's National Information Technology Apprenticeship System	3
Windows Vista Research for Software Development	4
Daylight Savings Time Schedule	5
On The Job For ITD	5
Plan for a Successful Meeting	6
Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System Replacement	7
setting expectations delivering results - ITD's 2006-07 Annual Report Released	8

NASCIO AWARDS OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN THE FIELD OF STATE IT: SELECTS 11 WINNERS FROM 107 SUBMISSIONS

(Tucson, AZ) – The National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO) has selected 11 state IT initiatives in 10 categories to receive **2007 Recognition Awards for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Information Technology in State Government**.

North Dakota's National Information Technology Apprenticeship System (NITAS) receives recognition for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Information Technology in State Government for Project and Portfolio Management.

NASCIO's Recognition Awards Program, in its 19th consecutive year, features several categories, updated for 2007 to reflect the wide range of IT projects currently under development within state governments. Emphasis was placed on recognizing programs that exemplify best practices, support the public policy goals of state leaders, assist government officials to execute their duties, and provide cost-effective services to citizens.

"State information technology best practices should be promoted and shared," said Deputy Director of Information Technology, State of Oklahoma and NASCIO Awards Committee Chair, Joe Fleckinger. "NASCIO's Recognition Awards Program highlights leadership, innovation and collaboration. The program provides a showcase of successful initiatives from across the nation and encourages state governments to continue to focus on efficiency, excellence, and quality service to citizens."

Eleven award-winning entries were chosen from 107 submissions by 30 states. NASCIO's Awards committee, comprised of NASCIO state and corporate members representing leading public and private IT organizations selected the 2007 award recipients. The following is a list of award recipients organized by category:

Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery

District of Columbia - Unified Communications Center

Cross-Boundary Collaboration and Partnerships

State of Texas - Data Center Services Project

Data, Information, and Knowledge Management

State of Minnesota - Program Integrity Efforts: Preventing and Eliminating Welfare Fraud

Digital Government: Government to Business

State of Washington - Enterprise Business Portal Initiative

Honorable Mentions:

District of Columbia - LSDBE Online

State of Delaware - One Stop Business Registration and Licensing

Digital Government: Government to Citizen

State of Michigan - Michigan.Gov release 2.0

Digital Government: Government to Government

State of North Carolina - eCitation

Enterprise IT Management Initiatives

State of Michigan - Data Center Consolidation

Information Communications Technology Innovations

Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Forestry - Integrated Forest Information Resource System

Information Security and Privacy

State of Michigan - Security 2.0: Next Generation Security Program

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Information Security Architecture

IT Project and Portfolio Management

State of North Dakota - Building Project Manager Competencies via the Mentor/Apprentice Relationship

State government projects and initiatives from each of the 50 U.S. states were eligible to be nominated for these prestigious annual awards. Criteria for selection included a description of the business problem and solution including length of time in operation; significance of the project to the improvement of the operation of government; and the public value of the project encompassing benefits realized by service recipients, taxpayers, agency or state, and documented outcomes such as return on investment or cost avoidance data. Full submissions from all nominations are posted on NASCIO's website at <https://www.nascio.org/awards/>.

Continued on page 4

North Dakota's National Information Technology Apprenticeship System (NITAS)

North Dakota's implementation of the National Information Technology Apprenticeship System (NITAS) was selected as the winner of the National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO) 2007 Recognition Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Information Technology in State Government in the category of Project and Portfolio Management. The nomination, entitled Building Project Manager Competencies Via the Mentor/Apprentice Relationship, is the outcome of a two-year project initiated by the Enterprise Project Management Advisory Group and endorsed by the Enterprise Architecture Review Board and State Information Technology Advisory Committee.

The multi-agency project team engaged in an effort to build the competencies of state project managers through a combination of classroom training, certification, and competency based on-the-job learning by pairing apprentice candidates with experienced project management mentors. To date, 140 state employees have received classroom training, 28 have received the CompTIA Project+ certification, 10 have attained the Project Management Professional credential, and 31 NITAS apprenticeship certificates have been issued. Participating entities include; Attorney General, Bank of North Dakota, Department of Emergency Management, Department of Health, Department of Human Services, Department of Transportation, EduTech, Information Technology Department, Job Service North Dakota, Judicial Branch, K-12 Schools (Bismarck), North Dakota Public Employees Retirement System, North Dakota University System, and Workforce Safety and Insurance. This has been a great example of the potential of enterprise-wide projects.



Front Row: Roger Wetzel, Pam Anderson, Jeannine Wohl
Middle Row: Heather Raschke, Dave Eckenrode
Back Row: Dirk Huggett, Mark Molesworth, Shawn Meier

For additional information regarding project management in state government, visit the Enterprise Project Management website at www.nd.gov/epm.

Software Development
prepares for Vista
migration.

NASCIO is the premier network and resource for state Chief Information Officers (CIO) and an effective advocate for information technology policies at all levels of government. NASCIO represents the state chief information officers from the 50 states, U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia. Members include cabinet and senior officials from state government who have executive-level and statewide responsibility for information technology leadership. Other IT officials participate as associate members and private sector representatives may become corporate members. For more information about NASCIO, visit www.nascio.org.

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AMR Management Services provides NASCIO's executive staff. For more information about AMR visit <http://www.AMRms.com/>.

Windows Vista Research for Software Development

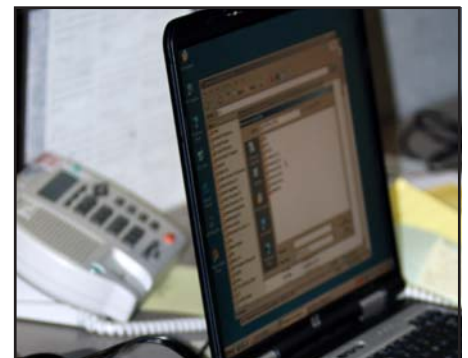
Vern Welder

Windows Vista is on the horizon and software development groups are preparing to support custom software applications when Vista arrives on customers' workstations. To prepare for Vista, ITD's Software Development Division initiated a research project to study Vista's effect on both the applications we've written, and on our software development environment. Our goal is to assure custom application compatibility with Vista.

Our Vista research project has two phases:

- The objective of Phase 1 is to determine how the applications we write will behave in the Vista environment. The scope of Phase 1 is to study applications we've written in PowerBuilder, CA:Gen, Lotus Notes, .Net, MS-Office, MS-Access, and Filenet.
- The objective of Phase 2 is to determine how our development tools will work on a Vista workstation. Thirty-seven development tools are being reviewed during Phase 2.

The outcome of our research is a document that identifies the issues discovered and possible solutions. Upon completion, we plan to share that research via the ITD website. Planned completion is late October 2007.



Daylight Savings Time Schedule

Daylight Savings Time
ends Nov. 4.

Earlier this year, Congress passed a law to change the dates for Daylight Savings Time (DST) in the United States starting in 2007. These changes could cause clocks and Microsoft Outlook calendar appointments on Windows Mobile powered devices to display incorrect times from March 11 – April 1, 2007, and October 28 – November 4, 2007, and again in subsequent years.

Check with your IT Coordinator to ensure that any potential conflicts are addressed with these changes. DST began on March 11, 2007, which was three weeks earlier than in past years, and it will end on November 4, 2007, which is one week later than normal.

U. S. Daylight Saving Time Schedule		
Year	DST begins 2 a.m. (First Sunday in April)	DST ends 2 a.m. (Last Sunday in October)
2005	April 3	October 30
2006	April 2	October 29
<i>New Federal Law In Effect</i>		
Year	DST Begins 2 a.m. (Second Sunday in March)	DST Ends 2 a.m. (First Sunday in November)
2007	March 11	November 4
2008	March 9	November 2
2009	March 8	November 1
2010	March 14	November 7
2011	March 13	November 6

On The Job For ITD

Ten years ago, Andrew Borden-King, Software Development Division, began his career at ITD as a consultant, then permanently joined the Department six years ago.

Andrew is responsible for scheduling, planning and project management of software updates and upgrades to the PeopleSoft Financial and HR/Payroll applications. He's also involved in the Business Intelligence and Performance Measures initiative as well as other strategic planning activities related to PeopleSoft applications.



"I am an SPA (Senior Programmer Analyst) by title, but my role since January 2005 has been that of State Patch Coordinator for ConnectND. Being a new role at ITD, the responsibilities consisted of 'duties as assigned,' so having the opportunity to further define and develop those responsibilities has been challenging but just as rewarding," stated Andrew.

When asked what he likes most about his job at ITD, Andrew responded, "The people make the difference! I work with an incredible group of people, all extremely knowledgeable, innovative, supportive, and caring."

Andrew holds a Masters Degree in Computer Science from Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.

While not on the job at ITD, Andrew enjoys bicycling and roller blading. Last summer's home improvement project was building a large waterfall and pond in his backyard.

Plan for a Successful Meeting

Dirk Huggett, Policy and Planning

Create an agenda - this helps crystalize your purpose and helps everyone understand what you're looking for.

Most of us understand the impact planning has on the success of an endeavor. However, it's surprising how often we forget that when it comes to meetings. When planning meetings, it's important to follow these basic steps:

- √ Identify the meeting's purpose.
- √ Invite the right people to participate. Nothing is more likely to cause failure than not having the people you need to discuss an issue.
- √ Determine likely issues that could impede your ability to succeed, then work out ways to overcome those issues.
- √ Create an agenda. This helps crystallize your purpose and helps everyone else understand what you want.
- √ Identify what processes you plan to use and how long you think it will take you. Sometimes you find yourself running out of time or scheduling things for five minutes even though you know it will take more time. Instead, consider narrowing your scope and holding multiple meetings. This also may help you invite only the people needed for that decision. Participants often get frustrated attending a meeting in which their agenda item is halfway through the list and then the meeting runs out of time before reaching that point.
- √ Make sure everyone gets an invitation and gets all of the information needed in order to be prepared for the meeting. Be sure to set expectations on what you want. For example, "Please be sure to read the contract and Exhibit 1 before the meeting so that we can address any concerns you may have."
- √ Arrive early and prepare the room. Make sure you have the tools you need (appropriate markers, flip chart, equipment, etc.) and that the room is set up in the manner you want. You also want to be there to greet the invitees and to be ready to start the meeting on time.



Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System Replacement

Vern Welder, Software Development

The new IVR infrastructure is scalable and it promises to be very reliable. IVR is a good solution when your client base needs to access and/or provide information from anywhere.

The State's Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System has been problematic for the past several years. We've experienced numerous outages at critical times and we feel the current vendor doesn't offer a viable upgrade path for the State. The current IVR hardware is near its end-of-life so we're taking this opportunity to replace the entire infrastructure.

ITD purchased an upgrade to our Nortel telephone voice infrastructure. Included in that upgrade is Nortel's IVR infrastructure. Nortel's IVR is based on the VoiceXML (VXML) industry standard. VXML is the W3C's standard XML format for specifying interactive voice dialogues between a human and a computer

Installation of the new infrastructure is underway and developers have been trained to write IVR applications in that environment. All IVR applications within the old infrastructure need to be re-written because they aren't compatible to operate on the new system. The Game and Fish Department has been gracious enough to be the pilot agency for the first system re-write.

After the Game and Fish pilot is successfully completed, ITD will start working with other IVR customers to plan for application replacement. In 2004, we estimated the cost to re-write each IVR application based on recreating like-for-like functionality. Using knowledge gained during the pilot project, we'll work with each customer to re-compute those estimates based on current customer requirements.

In the past, ITD hasn't promoted the use of IVR because we felt it wasn't prudent to grow within the old infrastructure. The new infrastructure is scalable and it promises to be very reliable. IVR is a good solution when your client base needs to access and/or provide information from anywhere. IVR is also a good option when your client base doesn't have ready access to the internet, but they have a telephone. With that said, ITD is again promoting IVR as a means of connecting state agencies to their customers.





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setting expectations delivering results ITD's 2006-07 Annual Report Released

At the Information Technology Department (ITD), we're committed to providing customer-centric services. This year's Annual Report *setting expectations delivering results* guides you through ITD's seven divisions, giving you a glimpse of how committed we are to delivering services for the betterment of information technology (IT) in the State of North Dakota.

Our staff works with ITD's customers on a daily basis to guide them through technology solutions to accommodate their business requirements. And not only are we finding solutions, we're evaluating how ITD can cost-effectively and efficiently meet those IT needs, improve our performance, and deliver services that help them accomplish their goals, whether it's developing an application, managing projects, hosting applications, or providing a highly available network to keep business flowing smoothly and securely. We're listening to our customers, whether it's through meetings, phone calls, or surveys, and acting upon their feedback.

In order to meet expectations to deliver the best service requires developing solid partnerships, communication, and collaboration between ITD and its customers to ensure both parties understand what's at stake to meet each other's expectations. By working hand-in-hand with our customers, ITD can deliver the right type of technology, deliver high quality services, and resolve issues to meet expectations.

Our annual report takes a look at the services provided by ITD's seven divisions and briefly discusses our accomplishments over the past fiscal year. With all divisions working together, ITD is able to provide the best services to our customers. As you read through the pages of ITD's annual report, you'll see an ITD committed to setting expectations to deliver results to meet the needs of our customers today and in the future.

